

REMARKS

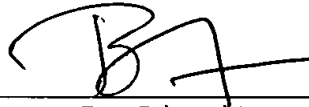
This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed on September 24, 2003. Claims 1, 7, 8, 12, 18, 19, 23, and 24 are amended. Claims 1, 3-5, 7-12, 14-16, and 18-26 are pending.

Applicant's undersigned attorney wishes to thank Examiners Barron and Lanier for the courteous and productive personal interview held on November 13, 2003. During the interview, the prior art (Thompson et al. and Sugisaki et al.) cited by Examiner Lanier was discussed. A proposal was made for amending the independent claims to clarify the term "dynamic range" to better distinguish over the prior art. It was agreed that the amended claims would overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103.

The amended claim language is derived from Applicants' specification. In particular, page 10, lines 26-30 explain that each "sample" has a "dynamic range" which is defined by the most significant non-zero bit, not including a sign bit. Thus, no new matter has been added. It is noted that in the claims, the term "data bit" is used to distinguish over a sign bit. Sign bits, when present, may be used to establish polarity of the sample value.

In view of the above, and the agreement reached during the interview, Applicants respectfully request that the present Amendment be entered, and that each of the claims be allowed. If there are any remaining issues that need to be addressed in order to place this application into condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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